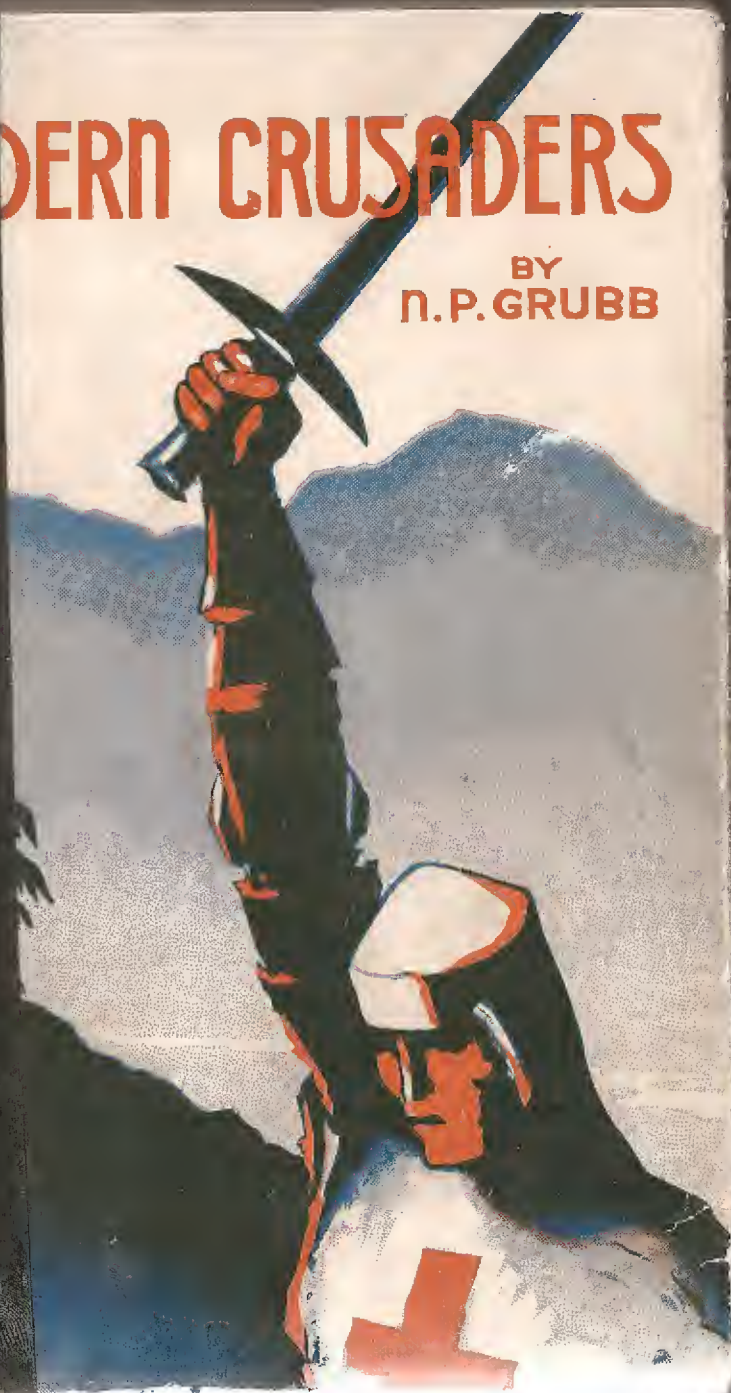


DERN CRUSADERS

BY
N.P. GRUBB



COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



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A typical Colombian homestead.

FIRST BIBLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2143 North Ballas Road
St. Louis 22, Missouri

MODERN CRUSADERS THE CHALLENGE OF COLOMBIA

By NORMAN P. GRUBB
author of
"C. T. STUDD—CRICKETER AND PIONEER"

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Foreword

THIS book is only Chapter One of a New Crusade, which will not finish till every soul of the eight millions of Colombia has been reached with the Gospel. Indeed, we ought to say that it is only Section One of Chapter One, the other sections being Crusades launched in four other lands these past three years, each of which we hope will have its story on record in due course. But the vision, the faith, the daring, the rapid growth, the courage amidst sufferings of the Crusaders in Colombia have riveted the attention of many, and "Modern Crusaders" tells the story. The Living God is the central figure, and our one hope is that all readers may see *Him* in these pages enthroned in His humble and devoted servants and soldiers, and going forth in them to make His never-ceasing appeal to His lost and scattered sheep, "Behold the Lamb of God,

which taketh away the sin of the world"; "Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

I acknowledge with much thankfulness help given by three friends in the publication of this book. Charlton Smith voluntarily drew and offered to us several suggestions for a cover, out of which we selected the striking picture on the outside. He also drew the splendidly clear map, as he has done a number of others at various times. My brother, Kenneth Grubb, has allowed me to use a number of his photos of Colombia, as printed on the frontispiece and opposite pages 14, 15, 37 (bottom), 45 (top), 64 (top).

And Miss Rose Muller, one of the W.E.C. office workers, has given hours out of her evenings to the typing and retyping of the book.

CHAPTER ONE

THE MISTAKE SOME PEOPLE MAKE

I AM afraid I went through my geography days at school without ever grasping the fact that there is one country called Columbia and another called Colombia on the earth's surface. But perhaps folk are better educated to-day! Yet I am not sure, for although we always make it very clear that we are talking about the Republic of Colombia in South America, I occasionally hear the tell-tale words "British Columbia" come out in the conversation, and know that I still have a companion in ignorance!

I first learned the difference when my brother Kenneth Grubb of the World Dominion Press made a journey with not much more than a canvas sack on his back, some three thousand miles from the mouth to the source of the Amazon, and then on foot through vast stretches of forest in Peru and Colombia. I remember the impression left on me as he described the journey in Colombia along a single forest track for weeks on end, made almost impassable through the ruggedness of the country.

Then again I read a description of the early explorers of those regions, as they first reached the banks of a great stream in the forest which was destined to lead them to the Amazon. "Forests seemed to stretch on every side to the very verge of the horizon. Not a barque dimpled

the waters. Not a living thing was to be seen but the wild tenants of the wilderness, the unwieldy boa, the loathsome alligator basking on the borders of the stream. The trees towering in widespread magnificence towards the heavens, the river rolling on in its rocky bed as it had rolled for ages, the solitude and silence of the scene, broken only by the hoarse fall of waters or the faint rustling of the woods; all seemed to spread out around them in the wild and primitive state as when they came from the hands of the Creator."

But that remained the limit of my knowledge till in 1931 I was asking my brother from his thorough knowledge of the whole of South America, what he considered the most populous region needing evangelization. He answered, "Colombia." This came as a surprise, and did not at all fit in with my previous idea of a land clothed with primeval forest. But he explained that the forests and grass plains form the interior of the Republic, some two-thirds of its surface, and are inhabited only by scattered settlers and wandering Indian tribes. But along the coast line, for an average depth of two hundred and fifty miles, run three parallel arms of the Andes, called the Western, Central, and Eastern Cordilleras. In between these are magnificent fertile valleys and tablelands, supporting a population of eight million people, of mixed Spanish and Indian extract. Six millions of these are still unreached by the Gospel. This was the informa-

tion we were seeking, and his words were far more than an explanation: they were a call from God.

At our Headquarters in London it had always been our custom to start the day's work with "morning prayers"—a half-hour spent in a short Scripture reading and a time of open prayer. Sometimes, especially in Mrs. Studd's day, these had been times of great power, but lately they had gone rather flat, and I at least must admit I often went more from duty than pleasure. And certainly we were never tempted to pray "overtime"! But in 1931 there was an earthquake in the W.E.C. The circumstances which caused it are past history now and not worth repeating, but an outstanding result remained, and may it ever remain. We learned then in our desperate need that there is only one Person who can carry on God's work, and that is God Himself; and that therefore there is only one supreme task for those who hold human responsibility in God's work—and that is to know God's will and do it. That meant an end to "formal" prayer meetings. Above all things, the times of meeting with God must be times of reality, whatever else suffered through it. No hurry, complete informality, and absolute openness both before God and between ourselves, were essential. Time limits were cut out of the morning meeting. Each went on as long as we were guided, and to this day are seldom less than two hours. For one or another such long times daily were impossible owing to

the necessary business of office and mission houses, but for all the rest they became the chief business at Headquarters. God's Word was given first place, then the facing out of every problem of the work in the light of what we had read, and finally the spreading of it all before Him on our knees. Wonderful times have they been. Laughter, tears, groans, and praises all have their share. Lives have been revolutionized, visions given and received, the impossible becomes possible in faith, and a little later in fact. All who know the inner history of the W.E.C. this past four years, know that from this daily Fountain Source the whole work has been revolutionized.

The first and greatest challenge that came to us was this: If the Bible is full of the lives of men who were given impossible commissions, but achieved them by faith, what were we going to do about our commission? In other words, Did we accept the full implication of our title, "Worldwide Evangelization Crusade"? This year 1931 was a crisis-time in the Crusade, for the work was passing into the hands of a second generation. Mrs. C. T. Studd at the home end had gone to be with the Lord three years before, and now C. T. Studd had joined her from the Heart of Africa. Both leaders had gone. Now the supreme question was: Would the vision, faith, and abandon of these two great souls die with them? Would it be with the W.E.C. as it is said to be with so many movements of God, a

cooling off and toning down when the founders had gone? Or could the very opposite happen? Could the second generation carry out in fact what had been given to the founders in vision? God had clearly spoken to C. T. Studd as he obeyed His call in 1910 and went out to the Heart of Africa, as he himself recorded:

"As I left Liverpool, on retiring to my cabin the first night, God spoke in a very strange fashion. He said, 'This trip is not merely for the Sudan, it is for the Whole Un evangelized World.' To human reason the thing was ridiculous, but faith in Jesus laughs at impossibilities."

The work had been thoroughly established in the Heart of Africa, but now what of the worldwide vision? We faced the challenge squarely. We knew that we were C. T. Studd's successors, and therefore God's commission to him was now God's commission to us. And better still, God's promises to him were His promises to us, especially those of Joshua 1: "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee." And so we could do no other than accept. It meant that we had to acknowledge as our duty and task the evangelization of all areas in the world still unreached by existing Missions and not in their immediate programmes. We had already a good idea of many of them, and began to take them up and name them daily before the Lord. Only one concerns us here—Colombia. It was because of this renewed vision that I had asked Kenneth Grubb to indicate to us South America's neediest field,

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so that we might take that up also ; and his answer was the Lord's pointer to us. From that time forward Colombia became part of our commission.

We talk about faith as an adventure. And it surely is. The whole point in the lives of men of faith is that they believe God in hopeless circumstances, and then act on the assumption that their faith is as good as substance. Well, now the Lord had given us a glorious chance to walk the same pathway ourselves. God had given us a vision and faith to believe it. But that was all. We were to enter Colombia, as well as a number of other lands. But how? We must have a leader : we knew of none. We must have money : the world's financial crisis had just begun ; it would be enough to keep existing work going without starting new. And so on. How well I remember the feeling of hopelessness that came over me once as I spoke of Colombia and its needs with a friend, and both of us agreed that God was calling the W.E.C. to go in. It seemed an impossibility to start a new Mission in such circumstances.

But the wonder and secret of this life is in the believing, not the scheming and planning. God has said plainly that "*Faith* is the substance of things hoped for." And all that follows is but another example of it. We can say that in the succeeding weeks we did not raise a finger to start a work in Colombia, but we did keep believing. We made a deliberate point of not



Buenaventura, the port of arrival.

A glimpse of the luxuriant Cauca Valley with the winding river, taken from the slopes of the Western Cordillera.





A corner of a park
in Bogotá, capital
of Colombia.

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turning our minds outward to seek for ways and means of fulfilling this vision, but concentrated them upward on God. It is He Who did everything. As a matter of fact, there was nothing we could do even if we had wanted to! Thank God! We prayed and believed, and sat back to see the result. God acted. And if anyone thinks that this life of faith is an unpractical dream, read what follows.

A Roman
Catholic
procession
in a
Colombian
city.



IN 1931 Pat Symes came home for a furlough. He had had five years of the hardest pioneering in the world. With two companions he had paddled up a little-known river near the mouth of the Amazon. Leaving the last traces of civilization behind, they pushed on between a never-ending wall of forest on both banks. Often hacking their way through when fallen giants lay across the stream, hanging their hammocks each night beneath the trees, shooting monkeys for fresh meat, they at last reached the central village of the Guajajara tribe of Red Indians. This they made their home. The attempt to evangelize this tribe had already cost a life, Fenton Hall, and later cost another, the first woman worker, Mabel Roberts. One of the three returned home, but Fred Roberts and Pat Symes persisted through sickness, danger, and often disappointment. When Pat came home about fifty Indians had confessed Christ, some of whom are to-day evangelists to their own people.

But God's way are not ours. What seemed to Pat to be a life's work was only really a preparation. Somehow or other a book came into his hands which described the spiritual condition of several of the South American republics. Amongst these was Colombia. As Pat read, the unexpected happened: a burden for Colombia

came upon him, and, exactly by what means we have not been told, God made it clear to him that it was more than a burden, it was a call to go there.

It was remarkable enough that just about the same time out in Brazil God was finding His man for a new Crusade to Colombia, and in England was preparing the agency. But what made it still more wonderful was that He used the very same mouthpiece in both cases, for Kenneth Grubb was the writer of that book.

The time to bring the two of us into contact with each other, however, had not yet come, for God's preparations were not yet complete. The one thing that matters to Him is that He has a "vessel sanctified, meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work." Once He has that, all history proves that neither man nor devil can stop the fulfilment of His plans. Booth Tucker, the founder of the Salvation Army in India, had once expressed the same thing in a letter to C. T. Studd: "We feel that our special need is that of *sanctified flesh and blood* to carry on this war. After all, the one great qualification now, as in the days of old, is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. 'Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?' ought to be asked of every would-be missionary. For lack of this how many failures are met with!" This last sentence described Pat Symes. He was not yet a "vessel meet for the Master's use" as leader of a new Crusade. He had gone out to the Mission field

keen, consecrated, out to bring people to Christ, only to find himself comparatively useless in the warfare for other souls, because of the civil war raging within himself. How could he fight a winning battle in other lives when fighting a losing one in his own? There in the Amazon forest, enduring untold hardships, loneliness, and dangers, something infinitely worse than any physical suffering had been gnawing at his soul—the constant struggle with besetting sin, and very often the defeat:

"I have been seeking holiness in all my way [he wrote later]. I have longed for it, wept for it, but failed to grasp it. I fought against temptation. Often I won, but often I failed. I hated myself for the fall, and determined after each fall never to fall again, but kept falling."

And in that condition he returned home, outwardly a successful pioneer, inwardly a failure.

Pat's home is in Australia, and there he spent a year—but not a happy one. He had resigned from the W.E.C., for reasons which need not now be gone into, but secretly he knew that in doing so he had disobeyed God. Those with whom he went into fellowship refused to encourage him in his new call to Colombia, so he dropped it and set his face to return to Brazil—a further act of disobedience. But God's ways in forging His weapons of war are always the same. He has to teach us at all costs that "carnal weapons," self-activity in all forms, can never be used in the spiritual warfare. In order to do it,

He has to let us try it out for ourselves. We serve and fight mainly in our own strength until we have made a thorough muddle and failure of it. Then, in our extremity, if we are willing, the Spirit reveals the truth to us. We *must* be crucified with Him in our own experience: then the secret of Resurrection Life becomes ours. The crisis comes, we face the depth of surrender it means and the cost of it; we enter in, and there begins in us a new quality of Christian living, consciously empowered, commissioned, guided, "a sharp threshing instrument having teeth," "God's battle axe" (Jer. 51: 20).

For Pat the crisis came, in spite of his efforts to avoid it! He planned his return to the Amazon direct from Australia, but instead had to come to England. He paid us a friendly visit, neither of us imagining what its outcome would be. But hardly more than a few minutes had passed before intensest conviction seized him. The whole truth was revealed to him of God's leading and his disobedience—and the price of obedience. The final battle was fought in a further call a few days later. Much more was involved in it than can be described here: To choose God's will meant to take a path which practically all who knew him would condemn; it might mean, and ultimately did mean, the loss of the one most dear to him on earth; the cost can best be realized when he tells us of that hour. "I sweated as I have never done in my life." But he made the choice—God's will at any cost; and in that

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act of obedience God met the deepest need of his life ; Pat went on the Cross, the Holy Ghost took full possession, and a new Pat Synes went out to begin a new life. Months afterwards he wrote, "I have got complete victory," where he had previously written, "I kept falling." From inward bondage he entered into glorious liberty, and the promised rivers began to flow which carried him far beyond merely personal victory out into a "Peniel" experience of "power with God and with man," equipped now as well as commissioned, and with eyes to see the fullness of the vision — that God had called him to challenge a whole country with the claims of Christ.



John Harbeson



Harold Wood



Pat Synes



Nesta Keri Evans



Willie Easton



The W.E.C. family at Zipaquica.
Pat Symes, John Harbeson,
Harold Wood.
(Sitting) Nesta Evans and
Señora Matilde with her four
children.



Two heroines of the
Cross.
Señora Matilde de Hoyos,
first W.E.C. Colombian
Crusader, and Nesta Evans
with a bag of scriptures.

CHAPTER THREE

TWOPENCE AND A HUNDRED POUNDS

THE vision ; the leader—now how would the Lord supply the next necessity, the money? We were quite clear that no money given for the existing W.E.C. work should be deflected. If the Lord was calling us to another field, He would obviously also supply the new funds. Pat being an Australian, all his friends were thousands of miles away, and under the impression that he was on the way back to Brazil, so there was no prospect of supply through ordinary sources. We considered two hundred pounds would be an adequate sum with which to start.

Six weeks passed. The suggestion of his doing some deputation work was made. For days he made this a special matter of prayer, and although so contrary to all human reasoning, God made it plain to him that he was not to do it, and that He would provide for his needs without it. So plainly did God speak that he wrote it down in his notebook the same night, although there did not seem a human hope of it. The Lord also told him that if he had living faith he must declare it. In the morning Bible-reading he felt he ought to speak, but asked God for a sign, telling Him that if He would bring me across his path in an unmistakable fashion, he would tell me. A short time later, when Pat was in conver-

sation with a guest in the drawing-room, I walked in. Pat knew that God had answered, so, fearing to delay for a moment, he made his declaration at once in the presence of the guest.

That afternoon I asked Pat to go to the other end of London to do some business. I little thought that he had only sixpence in the world! He said nothing, and went. He spent fourpence on getting part way there by a cheap tram-fare. He did his business, and walked back into the city so as to use his last twopence on the last part of the journey. But on the Embankment he met a "down-and-out" who asked the price of a cup of coffee. Pat said he could not give it, as he only had twopence to get him half-way home. He passed on, but God told him to go back to that man and talk to him about his soul. He did it, but soon found that he could not speak about his soul and neglect his body. So the twopence changed hands on the condition that the man would read two tracts, the handshake and grateful look he received being reward enough. Pat returned home penniless after a three-hour walk and wringing with perspiration. I met him at the hall door with the information that during his absence I had been given a cheque of a hundred pounds for him. While he gave away his last penny, the Lord sent him back a hundred pounds! And that hundred pounds had come from the guest in whose presence in simple obedience to the Holy Spirit he had declared his faith to me that morning that God would send

the money without deputation work! Thus God works for the one who wholly believes and obeys.

The first hundred pounds having been so wonderfully provided, we were sure that God's time had come to go forward, even though there was no sign of the second hundred pounds. A few items of equipment were bought, and his passage booked for June, 1933. Actually one further barrier, which might have been most formidable, was surmounted by the brotherly action of a missionary leader of another Mission. We learned that no missionary can enter Colombia without a permit only to be obtained at the capital, Bogota. We knew no one out there who could vouch for us, but Kenneth Grubb gave us the address of a friend of his, the senior missionary in Colombia, who is held in high regard by the Government as the founder of the first school in the country—Rev. A. Allan of the American Presbyterian Mission. Not only did he obtain the permit for Pat, but he and his wife opened their home to him on arrival and have been warm friends ever since. Thank God for this evidence of a unity in Christ and a love for the salvation of souls which overflowed all possible denominational or mission barriers!

Almost Pat's last words before sailing were: "I am expecting the Lord to send that other hundred pounds any time." No one "expects" from the Lord in vain. Within two days of his sailing we received a cheque of fifty pounds for

Colombia from one of whom we had never before heard. But that was not good enough for Pat. On hearing the news in Colombia, he wrote back that with other smaller gifts the total had now reached one hundred and seventy pounds, "so that means I need another thirty pounds. That would be a fulfilment, but another fifty pounds would be the 'overweight'!" The letter arrived on a Saturday. On the Monday we received another letter from a far distant source, and in it was a cheque of sixty-four pounds for Pat Symes. The two hundred pounds and the overweight!

PAT's port of arrival was Buenaventura, which has the pleasant reputation of being one of the wettest towns in the world, with an average rainfall of 320 inches in a year.

"From London I went to Amsterdam [wrote Pat], and took ship in a Dutch cargo boat for Colombia. After, I think, the most pleasant sea voyage that I have had, we arrived in Buenaventura. On the boat God gave me confidence that he would put me through the customs without any trouble at all, to testify that He was with me in entering Colombia. Well, when I arrived, the captain of the port came on board, and after looking at my passport, asked me for something that I did not have, and withheld it. I went outside and told the Lord that I was looking to Him to put me through. I was called back half an hour later and given my passport and a permit to land. Then I just went to the customs and passed through in a few minutes. I praised God as I went up the landing-stage.

"From Buenaventura, which is in the wet tropical region, we set off by train for the interior. Through dense tropical growth and banana plantations that reminded me much of Brazil, gradually rising up through a deep gorge, out of this into milder climate, gradually climbing up round and round, past villages and

towns, up through cattle and cultivated lands. Small holdings with their little farms just clinging to the steep mountain-side. After about some three hours we reached the summit of the Western Cordillera (mountain range), some six thousand feet above the sea. Then we descended into the valley of the River Cauca."

Of this beautiful valley Kenneth Grubb once wrote: "From the brow of the Western Cordillera it was possible to get some faint idea of the richness of this region, about thirty miles broad, an irresistibly glorious sight. The valley lay out beneath us, reaching away to the central range. It resembled a vast but verdant carpet. The winding stream of the Cauca came into view, carving a sinuous channel through this magnificent garden. Fields lay between trees, green, fresh, and fat with abundance of pasture. The cattle were grazing, congregated in the friendly shade, meditating by the streams of water. Occasionally tall and lofty palms leant in the breeze, and groups of graceful bamboos, a common characteristic of Colombian tropics, were bowing over crystal pools. In the soft morning light it presented an exquisite scene. Beautiful among fluvial basins of the earth must be the valley of this river. Such secret joys are the treasures of the immense, scarce conquerable Andes."

Here Pat stayed for a week in the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, missionaries at a city in the valley, called Palmira. However,

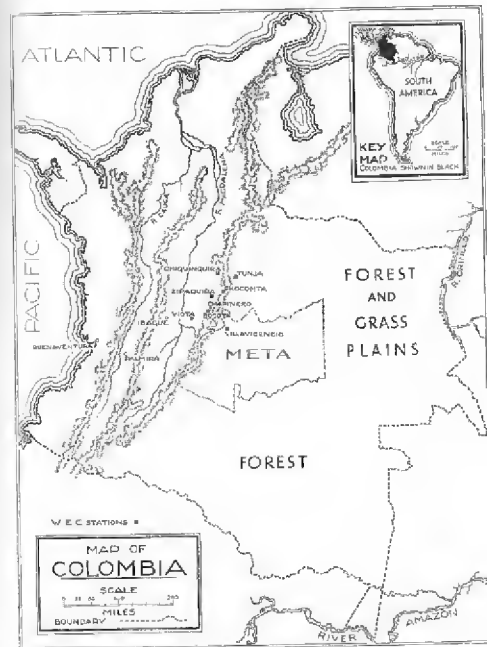
before arriving in Colombia, while on board ship, Pat wrote that God had told him to go direct to the capital, Bogota, and not spend time and money looking round en route, as he had contemplated doing. So after a week he moved on.

"It was a very interesting journey. I left Palmira about 2.30 p.m., and went to a place called Armenia, right at the base of the Central Cordillera. I stayed there two nights with Mr. and Mrs. Taylor of the C.M.A. They are doing a very fine work for the Lord, and have been blessed much. I left Armenia in the morning about five o'clock by car. We began to climb almost immediately, and before long we were away up in the clouds with a keen wind at a low temperature. The road crosses this range at the height of about twelve thousand feet. One had a glorious view of the plains below. We rapidly descended, and about 10 a.m. came to Ibagué. Here we took train and continued the down journey until we came to the Magdalena River, about nine hundred feet above the sea. Leaving that river, we began to rise, and continued rising to the tableland right in the heights of the Eastern Cordillera. It is an extensive highland plain some nine thousand feet high, with a mild climate, being the most thickly populated part of Colombia.

"I had a great welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Allan. They are just as kind as can be, and keen for the Lord, and for the present I am living in their home. Bogota is the capital city of the

Republic, with a population of 235,000 people. A nice clean city with every modern convenience—very needy as far as the Gospel goes. The Presbyterians have been here for some years, but they have not been able to cope with the need. For comparison, take a city of the same size at home and reckon how many Protestant churches are there, and compare it with this city with one. Colombia is a needy field, and offers every opportunity in any climate you like to choose. In the whole of the country there are about twenty-five places occupied by foreign missions. This is all there is to supply the need of some eight million people."

Kenneth Grubb's description of Bogota is: "For the capital of a growing nation Bogota is strangely isolated, and the journey from the sea occasionally takes three weeks or even more. But in the midst of this isolation a small but select literary coterie has developed, and 'the Athens of South America,' as Bogota has sometimes been called, has always been distinguished in the sphere of letters. There are few distinctive buildings, and the large plaza with the cathedral and Government offices is the only centre of prominence. Beyond the city the level plain, the floor of the plateau, is green and perfectly flat, divided into fields and spotted with groups of trees, with houses clustered together to form villages. A margin of heights rings in this plain on every side. In the far distance appear glimpses of the Central Cordillera. From beneath the clouds the





The cattle market at Zipaquira. The roof of our first W.E.C. Headquarters can be seen in the centre background.

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mighty snowpeaks of Tolima, Hervo, and Ruiz peep out from time to time. Seventeen miles from Bogota is the Tequendarma Falls. It is set in a natural amphitheatre of rocks and crowned by towering cliffs. The water pours over a preliminary step about fifteen feet down, and then makes the final vertical plunge. The sheer drop is 443 feet. The torrent, crashing on the rocks below, dissolves into clouds of spray which hide the scene and suggest the picture of a giant's cauldron.'

Six months later the final foundation of the new work was laid by the choice and occupation of a headquarters in the centre of an unevangelized area. Once again it was the result of direct guidance.

"You can publish now [wrote Pat] that our first move will be to a place called Zipaquira. When I was on the boat coming to this land, I asked the Lord to show me just where He wanted me to start work, so that I could say that it was all of Him. I had expected on arrival to have a look round and see where was the best place to start, but the Lord told me that there was no need to do this. Well, after prayer on the boat, I put the point of my compass on the map at Zipaquira and drew a circle around it as the place. At that time I knew little about the need and advantages of the country. But I have waited on the Lord since I have been here, and all His leading has been to the place He showed me on the boat. This is the way the Lord does things.

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He has just chosen for us the most needy district in Colombia, and puts us in a town which is the opening town to this large district. The more I see of the Lord's leading these days, the less trust I have in reason."

Pat had gone to the Lord for guidance even to the right choice of a house; and it was well he did so, for, not long after their occupation, strong pressure was brought to bear on the owner to turn them out; but he refused to do so, and has remained steadfast ever since.

"The Lord had promised to give me a house in Zipaquirá [wrote Pat]. The other day Mr. Allan and I went up to get it. Mr. Allan knew a man there, and we set out to find him. A lad was found who knew him, and directed us to his home. But not until we had asked him about a house did Mr. Allan realize that he was not the man he was seeking, but his brother! However, the Lord knew that this was the man we were to see, as it proved. For he took us to a house belonging to himself, which proved to be the one for us."

The date of the removal to Zipaquirá, and therefore the real birthday of the Heart of Colombia Mission, was 6th February, 1934. By this time Pat had been joined by two reinforcements from England, John Harbeson and Harold Wood. Harbeson wrote:

"6th February was a red-letter day for me. Pat had purchased the things that we needed for

the house, and these made it necessary for us to have a motor-lorry to shift us from Bogotá to here. It was my joy to go with the baggage. If you can picture me on the top of that load of stuff, with not a pain or ache in my body, and the joy of the Lord in my soul, you have a picture of the happiest man in the world that day. I believe I sang every bit of the thirty or forty miles. The lorry was an old wreck of a thing; one wondered at times if it could possibly do the distance, but to me it was a Rolls-Royce, and we got there all right. Praise the Lord! So here we are in our first Mission station in Colombia, and in planting the standard of our Lord Jesus Christ in this place we have raised it in a place where the powers of Rome and hell have never been challenged before in this way. Now for the fight!

"Zipaquirá is a market town, and has a population of about five thousand. The surrounding district has a population of about thirty thousand, so that we have about thirty-five thousand people to begin with."

One more essential was an efficient Spanish teacher, Spanish being the language of Colombia. Pat had not much difficulty in acquiring it, owing to his previous knowledge of Portuguese on the Amazon, but he had to provide for the new recruits. Here again, by taking the matter to the Lord and wholly following His guidance, he was given not merely a language teacher, but one who was to prove

herself a heroine of the Cross, and has been accepted as our first Colombian missionary — Señora Matilde de Hoyos. Yet, owing to the fact that she has a husband who is still an unbeliever, and four small children, nothing but the direct leading of the Lord would ever have induced Pat to turn down more attractive offers and accept her, complete with husband and children!

"The Lord promised me a teacher before the end of the year [he wrote]. I told you in my last letter that I had had two opportunities of getting one, and both times the Lord said no. Well, the year went by and the teacher had not turned up. But on 1st January I told the Lord that I still believed He had given the teacher, even though he had not arrived on the scene yet. Then the Lord asked me, 'What would you do if you had the teacher now?' I said I would go right away to Zipaquirá. He said, 'All right, if you believe that you have the teacher, you had better go there in faith.' This made me sit up and take notice. But it did not take me long to say, 'All right, Lord, I will go.' Twenty days after the end of the year, and we were still telling the Lord that we still believed Him to do what He had said. Then on the 24th the Lord laid on me that I was to take a certain married couple. I prayed, and the more I prayed the more it seemed certain. We got together and prayed, and we all believed it was of the Lord. The woman is a full-out Christian. Her husband is an unbeliever, but is one person

that we have believed for. She is coming right into the work on faith. So God never fails. The difficulties of the family fade away when the Lord tells you to do a thing."

ROME IN THE RAW

"WE will not be satisfied till we have tasted your blood," shouted the crowd. And a few weeks later they had their wish. Blood was streaming from the forehead of the only English girl of the little party of missionaries in the market square, while the leader, Pat Symes, was on the ground beneath the feet of a frenzied mob.

Yet this was not the rage of some heathen devotees. The people were pouring out of a Roman Catholic church where they had been celebrating Mass. Colombia is not a "heathen" country. They have known of Christ for three hundred years. She has her priests and churches in every town. Yet the sad fact remains that she is totally ignorant of the simple, saving Gospel of Christ, the peace of sins forgiven, the power that sanctifies, the worship that is "in spirit and in truth." For that reason we have to speak of her as "unevangelized."

The missionaries in Colombia, as in all parts of South America, emphasize again and again that folk in England have no idea of true Romanism. To do that it must be seen in the raw, as in Colombia. Pat writes :

"Rome is *not Christian*: Rome is *pagan*. People do not know what Rome teaches. Let them see Rome in a Roman Catholic country,

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and they will see Rome in her true light. The Bible plainly teaches that there is only one Mediator between God and man, Jesus (1 Tim. 2 : 5) ; Rome denies that truth, and puts up Mary and the saints as mediators. The Bible plainly teaches that Jesus died once as a sacrifice : Rome teaches that every time the priest says Mass he sacrifices Jesus again. The Bible prohibits all kinds of images : Roman Catholic churches are full of them, and they are worshipped. The Bible teaches that salvation is by faith : Rome says, By works also, and adds such places as purgatory that deprive the Blood of its power. They give the attributes that belong to Christ and to the Holy Spirit, to Mary. Mary is the mother of God : she is also the mediator ; the Ark of the Covenant ; the refuge of sinners ; the door of heaven."

It is almost impossible for us to conceive of the depth of superstition and deceit to which Rome descends in Latin America. Kenneth Grubb was eye-witness of the following incident :

"In a certain town there had been a theft. The editor of the local paper was an agnostic, and saw in it a chance of a taunt at the Church. So he observed in an article that as the Church claimed to receive supernatural revelations, they should be able to name the thief. Next Sunday the priest took up the challenge by announcing from the pulpit that he had received by revelation the means of detecting the culprit, and would expose him the following Sunday. Needless to say, the

church was full when the day came, and amongst the congregation was Kenneth Grubb, who happened to be passing through. The priest mounted the pulpit, and holding a feather in his hand, announced that the Virgin had revealed to him that if he blew the feather over the congregation, the one upon whose head it descended was the criminal! He forthwith did so, the people at the back shuffling about as it came near them, so as to avoid it! Finally it began to come down on the editor's head, who appeared not to notice. Then, just when it was about to settle, the editor looked up, gave a puff, and up it flew again! This gave the cue, and the only known end of the feather was its being puffed from mouth to mouth by the delighted congregation. Such a story would be utterly incredible if it had not been received first-hand from an eye-witness."

Space forbids to add the story of how Kenneth Grubb personally questioned a Roman Catholic canon about an account he had heard of an image of Christ in his church which was supposed to have hair that grew, but which was discovered on close investigation by American tourists to be horsehair which was pushed up through holes in the plaster skull of the image. The story was cynically admitted by the prelate to be true.

Our own workers in Colombia have given instances of the same kind.

"A short while ago [Nesta Evans writes], in a village nearby there was a great drought and the seeds were spoiling, so the people were



The central plaza of Zipaquirá, the town, six thousand feet up in the Andes, where Pat Symes started work, and where the Crusaders have so often held meetings amidst stoning and persecution.

Market day at Zipaquirá.





A corner of the
market-place at
Tunja.

A street on the out-
skirts of Tunja,
where Harold Wood
is working.



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collecting money to buy a saint, and this saint they carried through the fields for the rain to come! What unutterable darkness!" And during a Sunday which was specially sacred, Nesta Evans, in hiding from the fury of a fanatical mob, wrote: "All Sunday from 5 a.m. till midnight, drinking, dancing, band, bells, bull-fights, screaming, Mass, music, and cinema. Oh, the patience of God!"

We are not unmindful of the fact that there are shining examples of holy living and uttermost devotion to Christ in the history of the Roman Catholic Church; nor do we doubt that to-day it has its hidden saints, who through all the encrusted error have penetrated to the living Saviour, but it is the universal testimony of all workers in Catholic countries, and supremely so in South America, that "Rome is pagan" and her followers in a darkness as black as heathendom and worse, for "if the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

Yet one more fact. The love of Christ and the persecution of an opponent, even though considered a heretic, are two irreconcilable things: and the sufferings of the Crusaders in Colombia these two years are only further tragic evidence of the gulf between Rome and Christ, the Christ of the meek and lowly heart." At the same time the Crusaders are thanking God for the persecution, because of the chance it has given them to show Him forth Who "when He was reviled, reviled not again."

In recent years a vigorous movement for liberation from Rome has arisen in the Republic, especially amongst educated classes. It has reached its peak this year in the election of a Liberal Government pledged to take steps in that direction. At the moment this is a tremendous help to the free preaching of the Gospel, and it has been most remarkable to see how the authorities have upheld and protected the missionaries against fanatical and priest-incited mobs. But it also has its grave dangers. We only have to look at Russia, Mexico, or Spain, to realize that the reactionary tendency in nations which have been dominated by a priesthood is to free themselves by abolishing all religion. Already Venezuela, the neighbour state to Colombia, is closed to missionaries, and there is much evidence that this attitude is rapidly spreading throughout South America. God's call is clear to us for an immediate campaign to evangelize the whole Republic while the doors are still wide open.

THE three were soon settled into their new home. "It is of real Colombian style [wrote John Harbeson]. We are not troubled with long flights of stairs to climb: we are living on the ground floor. As regards food, we are right down to Colombian fare, living just like the people, eating what they eat. It is very plain, but mighty wholesome. We want to get right down to the life of these people. We are convinced that this is the way God meant for us when He led us here."

Pat gives more details:

"We have Colombians living with us, and we just eat what the Colombian cook gives us. We have not taught her to do anything English. This is our menu:—Morning: cocoa without milk; porridge made from wheat that we grind ourselves, with milk; one piece of bread. Noon: one pound of meat between ten of us, rice, potatoes, and some other vegetables, some of which we grow ourselves, and soup. Night: rice, vegetables, and beans. At 8 p.m. we have a cup of coffee and a piece of bread. We start morning prayer at 8 a.m., and sometimes go on until 11 a.m. I think that in these days we do more praying than anything else here. Two days ago we had a day of prayer, and fasted of our midday meal; this is the second we have had since being

here, and God is impressing me that we must put aside every Wednesday for this prayer and fasting. Hell is strong here, Darkness is dense. Dear brother, I plead with you, do not send us any that are not fighters. I do not care what else they are, but they *must* be able to fight in prayer."

"The country is beautiful [continues John Harbeson]; the climate is the same all the year round. It is a strange sight to us to see roses and all kinds of flowers in full bloom in the month of January; there is no such thing as leaves falling in this country: everything is evergreen. In contrast to the beauty of the country is the awful state of the people. Most of them are very, very poor. The conditions under which they live are simply appalling. They build little shacks of one room, and in this the whole family lives; many of these are not to be compared to a moderately decent cowshed on a farm in England. No sanitary arrangements, no privacy of any kind. The family may be anything from two to a dozen. Then sum up the moral condition."

"They get up about 6 a.m. [adds Pat], and work until about 6 p.m. After having eaten in the evening, they all congregate, men and women, in a *chicharia* (drink-shop); here they sit and yarn, sing, play a whistle or a harp. They stay till about 9 p.m. A few get drunk, many get merry, but the rest have a few pints. They go to their respective homes. The whole family get into a small room, shut all doors and windows,

and all sleep together on a mat or a bed. Being poor, they have few blankets, and this is the only way they can keep warm in this high altitude.

"Killing one another is a common occurrence, especially where *chichi* (native beer) is sold, knives being brought out on the slightest provocation, then wounds and murders. Yet in the middle of all they speak of the Virgin, as beer is permitted at certain hours by the priests."

On the busy market day they made their first "Gospel raid." "We gave out a thousand tracts in these markets last Tuesday; the people received them well. We knew that the tracts would excite attention and start the people talking. We knew also that it would draw the attention of the priests, and it did. They warned the people against us in the church last Sunday. We had a good laugh to think of the Holy Ghost using the priest to advertise us. As Pat was out walking in the town on Sunday evening, he heard the people saying, 'That's the fellow the priest spoke of this morning.'"

The three had just been joined by the first woman Crusader from England, Nesta Keri Evans. God had picked her clean out of the world. She had a Christian upbringing, but as a young teacher in London she shared a house with an actress, and plunged into "dancing, cards, smoking, picture theatres, etc." "But," she added, "this life of pleasure gave me no satisfaction, and often I wondered what life was

for, and why I could not be pure, restful, satisfied, and happy." One bold shot was God's answer both to her own heart and the prayers of her father. She had come to Llandrindod Wells one August, but found to her dismay that in the same hotel as herself was a friend of her father's, no less a redoubtable hunter of souls than Mrs. C. T. Studd! Mrs. Studd was there for the annual convention. Nesta made sure of avoiding any contact with her, and, needless to say, went to none of the meetings. But Mrs. Studd knew whose daughter this very modern girl was, and prayed for a contact. It came—at the very last moment. Half an hour before Nesta was leaving for her home, she came down into the hall where Mrs. Studd was sitting. At the same moment a friend, a deacon in her father's church, came up the steps. On seeing Mrs. Studd, he asked to be introduced. She could not be rude and refuse. There was only time for one shot, but Mrs. Studd made it. "What are you doing for God in Wales?" Then, "Why aren't you a missionary?" The answer was a laugh. A few more words and they parted. But the shell had exploded well inside the defences. Within a few weeks' time Nesta Evans was standing in a public meeting, weeping, "oblivious to all," as the people sang, "Where He leads me I will follow." She followed—to the Heart of Colombia. Actually she was Pat's first reinforcement, but could not join him until there was a settled headquarters; so she spent her first six

months with missionary friends in the Cauca Valley, and then came on to Zipaquira.

✕ She arrived in time to take part in the first house-to-house visitation. She set out, satchel of scriptures over her shoulder. Pat had directed her to start in a certain street. It was "a bull's-eye bit of guidance." She knocked at the first door and was admitted. If she had known that the first person she would meet within was a "woman that was a sinner"—one who told afterwards that "it was a priest that put into her heart the wicked thoughts in the confession that made her a harlot"—she might have tried a more hopeful house. Thank God she did not. Instead of blasphemies she found her "waiting for the true Light."

✍ "Oh, the joy [wrote Nesta Evans] to pray in that whitewashed room with mud floors and in the candlelight, and then to see her smash her idol and the Virgin and the other pictures of the Trinity! I shall ever keep them, in memory of the first soul in the Zipaquira Church—Glory! Since then her daughter of eight, Blanche, and another boy of thirteen, have been given her for her hire. It is too wonderful to see how God has brought her right out, how she dares all, fears none, drinks in her Bible, and each Tuesday goes with Sigrieda, the boy, to sell portions of the Word in the plaza. The boy was whipped by six others and had his hand cut for his faith—and only just thirteen. Hearts prepared of God,

and she the first woman we met in our first house-to-house visiting."

Christ never made discipleship easy, and He never left would-be followers in doubt as to the price. "Whosoever he be that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be My disciple." "If they have persecuted Me, they will persecute you also." In so-called Christian countries a more comfortable Gospel is usually preached, the way made easy, the cost as small as possible. But in the mission field, as in the early Church, discipleship costs exactly what Christ said. John Harbeson wrote of this woman, Señora Elena's, experience :

"It costs these souls to take their stand for Christ. It's not a case of putting up the hand and then going your way, and nobody hardly knows it. No, no ! When one of these people takes the stand, they are immediately a marked person all over the city, and then they become the subject for taunts and jibes of their own people, and of all their neighbours. This woman has suffered much in the few weeks since her conversion. They stoned her in the market the other Tuesday when she was out selling Bibles, and a woman gave her a thumping ; and many are the insults she gets."

"She has passed through much trial [wrote Pat], being thrown out of the house, beaten, starved. She used to come down after suffering for days, and weep and say that God had not



Willie Easton, on trek to the Meta Province.



Distant and near views of the mountain route taken by Pat Symes and Willie Easton on their journey from the highlands down to the "hot country," the Meta Province.



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heard her prayers. One day I told her to get down and thank God for her trials. After a fight she got down, and with tears thanked God for all her hardship. She has continued doing it, and it has changed all her life. She is a new person. For two weeks I saw her a prisoner to the house, for she had no shoes to go out in. She came down here in the dark with an old pair every night, all smiles, and it gave joy to hear her thank God for not having shoes or clothes."

"She wanted to go out selling Bibles and giving out tracts to some other town [wrote Pat]. I suggested that she should do it here on the market day. She said that in this town she was too well known, and that all the people would insult her. I did not say anything. She came the next Tuesday, saying that she and a boy whom she led to the Lord were going out to sell in this town. They went and sold, and got lots of insults. What changed things? One night she had a dream, and Jesus said to her, 'He that is ashamed of Me, of him shall I be ashamed before the Father.' She took it as the Lord's voice, and obeyed. How wonderful of the Lord! The next day her mother came to see her, crying and saying that she would disown her if she went out again. She is going out to-morrow again, for the Lord brought to her notice the text, 'I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.' She told me to-day that she is going to put God before her mother."

But there are far worse dangers to these newborn babes in Christ than outward persecution. None knows so well as the missionaries, as they lovingly minister to them, how fearfully the devil can return to assault those over whom he once held unhindered sway. Something would lay hold of Elena, which Pat with true discernment recognized and dealt with as did the Saviour of old. On one occasion he wrote :

"She flew up in a rage and said that she was off. All I could do was to go to prayer and take victory. I determined to stay in prayer until I had got the victory. I just told her that I would not do anything until I had prayer with her. She refused to pray. The battle went on for about two hours. At last she got down on her knees, and I knew the battle was won. I prayed and took the victory over the devil, and in Jesus' name cast out the demon, and then told her to pray. She prayed, and saw all that she had done, and asked forgiveness of me and the Lord. After a talk she just had to lie down as one exhausted."

And even after eighteen months, just as we go to press, we have heard further news of Elena which first rejoiced and then saddened us. One letter told how in a prayer meeting she had received the fullness of the Holy Ghost and gave hopes of becoming an evangelist ; another letter a few weeks later, without giving details, tells of her falling into sin, which we can only take to mean gross sin. How well all missionaries know

the heart-break of such sudden and precipitous falls, from apparent heights to lowest depths ; for the unending battle of the mission field is not only to get the people to Christ, but to keep them abiding in Him and fighting for Him to the end.

FROM this first Gospel raid onwards there has never been any hesitation about the Crusaders' method of attack. It has been "over the top" with the Gospel. In tones of love and humility the invitation to the Cross has been made, insults have been met with meekness, persecution with turning the other cheek — but never with compromise, faintheartedness, or secrecy. The utmost aggression has been used in reaching every soul, by 'open-air' (which were previously unknown in Colombia), tract, visit, and the utmost plainness of speech both concerning sin and the Saviour, coupled with unending courage in returning again and again to the attack when most fiercely opposed. Apostolic methods meet with apostolic consequences. Then and now radiant witness arouses ruthless opposition; indeed, Satan's counter-attacks are the surest sign that the sword of the Spirit is piercing home. Four weeks after their campaign was launched, Pat wrote:

"*March 28.*—My, the old devil is showing his teeth! but this only makes us fight the more. A couple of Sundays ago we had a great time. We commenced the service as usual. I got on to the sermon, and there was a great crowd of people around the door. They began to shout and shout. I just went on with the sermon to those who were

in the room. They shouted, 'Down with the Masons! Live Mary! We will not be satisfied until we have tasted your blood.' Two stones came into the room, a big one falling at my feet. I did not take any notice, but just carried on. The noise got so bad that I could not go on, so I went to the door and said, 'Here I am. If you want to kill me, carry on.' They shouted and talked, but did not get beyond that. One woman testified the next day, 'The stone fell at his feet, and he never moved to pick it up or said a word.'

"*July 18.*—The priest withstood us last week, and threatened to turn us out. He defied the law. My, it is a fight out here! but we will win. If there were no law they would kill us. We would have been in Glory long ago if Rome had her power here. The open-air work is still going strong: we have four a week now. Nobody in this town will now be able to say that they did not have an opportunity. The people are getting to know us now, and to see that 'devils' cannot talk about holiness as we do. Holiness comes into every sermon, for it is the thing that hits them low—as far as I can see it is the one proof of Christianity. When people interrupt now, some of the people who are listening will tell them, 'If you do not want to listen, then go away.'"

On July 28 John Harbeson wrote:

"We hardly have a meeting now without the police arresting one or two. Last Tuesday, while I was preaching in the market square, an old chap threw horse-dung and hit me on the head;

the police immediately pounced on him and took him to the barracks, and I had to go down in the afternoon and get him out. On Thursday night the police did not turn up for our meeting, and during the time we were singing they threw horse-dung and stones, hitting the señoras, but missing Harold and me, lucky beggars that we are! Last Sunday week we were in the midst of a wild, laughing, and jesting mob at the station. Señora Matilde managed to get through her message with difficulty. She had to shout for all she was worth to make herself heard above the noise of the crowd. It was a real joke to see her; she is a great soul. She is going through with the Lord, and is with us in the work, heart and soul, right up to the neck."

There would not be merely persecution to record, but certainly serious injury and probably martyrdom, but for this totally unexpected provision of the Lord for their protection — the police. From the first attack made on them the police regularly put in an appearance and promptly arrested their persecutors. Almost wherever they have gone, in town or village, the authorities have given permission for free speech, and shown their determination to see it carried out by sending police protection. Sometimes this has been both a joke and an embarrassment, as when John Harbeson writes about a visit to the village of Nemocon: "To our surprise, we had a guard of six police from the capital. We laughed to see these fellows marching into Nemocon with

us." As we grasp the wonder of the fact that in this fanatical Republic the Crusaders have enjoyed a complete liberty in preaching the Gospel which many European countries do not allow, we realize that this attitude of the authorities has been one of God's greatest gifts to the work.

It raised one problem. To what extent should they rely on civil protection in times of persecution? The obvious temptation was to appeal to the police when they knew that they would respond, and in one or two tight corners this was done.

"One night the meeting was awful [wrote Pat], insults and row, and we could not speak. I went for the police, and while I was away the others got stoned. Señora Elena chased one of the stone-throwers and gave him in charge. He got jail."

Actually that was the incident which brought their questionings to a head. They were not easy about claiming the aid of the police, and still less so about giving their persecutors in charge. So they definitely spread the matter before the Lord and received clear guidance. "The Lord told us to trust HIM. If the Lord wants police, He will send them." Upon that they have acted ever since. Defencelessness, the refusal of any kind of human weapon, the return of love for hate, the use of only the spiritual weapons of testimony and faith, is the unconquerable and all-victorious

way of the Cross — the only true and God-honouring method of waging Christian warfare.

Since that decision two others have been taken, both acts of simple, unquestioning obedience to Christ's command in the Sermon on the Mount. The first was not even to defend themselves, a stage further than the decision not to appeal to others for protection. There was a specially hot time in the open air :

"They openly attacked us with stones, with only a few yards between them and us. I tell you it was exciting. During the tumult I was busy hanging on to the coat-tails of Señora Elena, who was making frantic efforts to get at the men. She has some Indian blood in her, and it often boils over. We were right up against these half-mad, half-Indian men. The next thing I heard was the voice of Don Pat telling us to beat it, and we did. A kindly neighbour opened her door to us. As Don Pat took the corner one of the men let fly with a stone and hit him on the ankle, laming him."

This roused Pat, and he turned and gave the man some of his own medicine. When all was quiet again, they came out and continued their open-air meeting. But on returning home the Lord convicted Pat that to use physical force in this manner was not to be lightly condoned as the healthy use of "muscular Christianity," but to be wholly condemned as a recourse to carnal weapons, which can never produce anything but carnal fruits. Pat told the others what God had

told him, and from that time forth he, together with the other Crusaders, wholly renounced the use of physical force in self-defence.

The second concerned the defence of one's rights and property. We cannot quote exactly, owing to a mislaid letter, but it was to the effect that a man brought a sudden action for damages against Pat. His sister had gone to Pat, we think to have a tooth extracted, free of charge, of course. Afterwards she was ill, and the man claimed that it was due to a faulty extraction. Pat was ordered to pay a sum of money in compensation. A defence would have been easy, but on the ground of Matt. 5 : 40, Pat made none, and paid the sum.

Four 'open-air' were held weekly from this time onward. By far the most successful have been the Sunday meetings in front of the station. Crowds visit the town on that day to see the famous salt mine, so that they get audiences of from two hundred to five hundred. As there is a great deal of drunkenness all day, especially at the time of the cattle sales, when by the evening "it is hard to find a person who is not the worse for liquor," the meetings are often the scene of savage assaults. Peggy Bennett writes, August, 1935 :

"To-day the feast and procession in honour of the Ascension (?) of the Virgin was celebrated here, and at the station was a great crowd of fanatical Catholics. We started our meeting,

John Harbeson preaching. Then the crowd started! From every quarter came cries of '*Vive la Virgen!*' 'Down with the Protestants!' and one great burly Colombian incited the crowd to fever pitch, yelling and menacing us. Then, as we stood silently watching, he moved forward, his face red and hot, eyes blazing with fanatical hatred, and started punching those nearest, while others did so on the other side. Stones and gravel came hurtling over, and the crowd tried to rush us. Strange to say, to-day we had not a single policeman, which was very unusual, but God was in it. Suddenly a young fellow rushed forward, remonstrating with the ringleader, declaring that he too was a Roman Catholic, but demanded fair play. If he did! The wilder element concentrated on him, and he was swept along and punched and badly treated by these blinded men. God bless them! Then some one went for police, and when these arrived they had a tough time trying to quell the mob. The people seemed to be possessed by Satan, and in spite of police they yelled like demons. Then many who were on our side shouted, 'Carry on; carry on!' And several street lads who before had yelled with the loudest, drew up in a line behind us, saying they would protect us. Yet with all this tumult, deep was the peace of God in our souls. One felt as if one's real self was looking on, all was so unreal. I have felt so often at these times the real power of God all around. Señora said afterwards that some desperadoes behind her were speaking

of getting out their knives and pistols! But they could not. One woman, who hears us in the week occasionally, said she could not understand why we did not run away! NESTA told her that Jesus died for us, and that we, in the preaching of the Gospel, are ready to die if necessary for Him."

The next move was to visit the villages surrounding Zipaquira. In each case the mayor was called upon, and in almost all permission was readily given to hold 'open-air.' Their reception was as turbulent as in the town. A village called Cajica was the worst, and affords a good example both of the sufferings of the Crusaders and the spirit in which they endured. Pat wrote on September 24, 1934:

"Some weeks ago we decided that the Lord's time had come to open up a new place called Cajica to the Gospel. It is known to be very fanatical. Four of us went down two whole days, and did nearly all the town and surrounding farms. We got a very good reception and sold lots of portions. NESTA had an encounter with the priest and a few tracts torn, and I had a gospel thrown in the mud. On Sunday morning Señora Matilde, Bill Easton, and myself went down. We started well, we sang, and I began to preach. They heard me for a little over five minutes, and then they began to howl. A few small stones and some banana skins came over, but we escaped. They would not let me speak, and threatened all kinds of things. Yesterday we went again. He sang and I spoke. Just before I finished the

people came out of Mass, and they came down upon us like madmen. I finished what I had to say, and the Holy Spirit calmed them, and then the fun began. They covered us with all the filth that they could find, then they began to buffet us and push us; we tried to make our way through them, and they went mad in their fury—punched, pushed, and hit. Señora and I got hit with fists all over the body. It was a case of trying to get away in the midst of a howling mob and help one another. I tried to protect Matilde, and when they had nearly put me on the ground she lifted me up and got the blows. Nesta got a big stone on the head and bled freely. I did not know it had happened until we got to the municipal building. The police came to our aid, and held back the angry crowd. If they had not come, you might not have got this letter to-day, for the rage of Satan was in their faces. We do praise God that He has chosen us to suffer a little for Him. Hallelujah! We can all say that while we were being beaten we never felt one little bit of hatred in our hearts, nor did we want to hit back. Nesta lost some blood, and was very weak from the pain. While I washed her with my handkerchief and water from a pipe, Señora Matilde preached again to the people at the door of the building. She wept, telling them that we had only come out of love, and loved them still. We came home, and had a praise meeting in the evening. Hallelujah! They are two brave women: God give us more like them! They are the kind of women

who will help bring Colombia to the feet of Christ. Matilde is one of us, and just as precious to us as if she were from England."

Señora Matilde has persisted in her visits to Cajica week by week, until in August, 1935, eleven months after that first visit, the first souls accepted Christ. Ellen Jones writes:

"Last Monday I went with Señora Matilde to Cajica. Praise the Lord! in the first house we called at, the father of the three girls, who said the week before that he did not believe the Bible, gave his heart to the Lord Jesus. When Señora went last week, his daughter said that he continually interrupts them in their work with the Bible for them to read to him. Then we called on the woman whose baby had hindered the week before, and—all praise to God!—she came right through; it was great to see her joy. The first two souls in this hard place Señora has been visiting for months. But the enemy started to kick. When we got to the station a man kicked Señora's attache case, and threw stones at us the whole time we waited for the train. He could not get very big ones in the station, praise the Lord! but one whizzed past my head, catching my hair. All the others we had in our backs. Anyhow, our hearts were too full of joy to be frightened."

Here and there in other villages also, souls have surrendered to Christ. Nesta Evans wrote of her first stay in a village:

"I have been for five weeks in the next village, nursing a confinement case, my first alone, and

my Master wonderfully helped me. To the last day before the confinement the wife was burning candles all day before her saint. My faith wavered, but not for long, and all here were praying. The last day came, and to me she was an almost impossible case, but in the midst of her pains I prayed with her; and from that moment she changed, her first words after the birth being, "I am a believer!" and midst her tears and praises her face lit up. Then the maid, too, a few weeks later surrendered her life to Jesus."

PIZARRO, the conqueror of Peru, in the most critical moment of his life, drew his sword and traced a line with it on the sand. Then turning towards the south, where Peru lay, he said to his starved and ragged band of followers, "Comrades, on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, disease, and death; on this side ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with its riches; here Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south." So saying, he stepped across the line. Eleven others followed him with the avowed purpose of carrying on a crusade against a powerful empire, staking their lives on its success. And these twelve conquered Peru.

There comes a time in every campaign, whether spiritual or temporal, when such decisions have to be made and such risks taken; only that the soldier of Christ has the advantage of all others, for he has but to obey the commands of an Unseen Captain instead of relying on his own judgment.

Pat now made such a decision. The new recruits were getting a hold on Spanish. Before them was the vision of a whole country to be evangelized. At present there were only two men and one woman with him. By normal

methods of comparative safety, one other area might be entered. The two men might go there, while Nesta Evans remained with him and Señora Matilde. There was only one alternative—a soldier's golden opportunity. Each, including Nesta, might go alone and evangelize a district. But it was not Pat who really made the decision. The matter was laid before the Lord, and not until He had clearly revealed His will to Pat, did Pat make it known to the others. In the face of the flying stones, threats, and insults of Zipaquira, each of the little band, including Nesta Evans, "stepped across the line," well knowing that each would receive separately in their new areas the treatment meted out to them unitedly in Zipaquira. Now, when we see what that act of obedience has already meant in the rapid spread of the Gospel, it is easy for us to admit it to be God's guidance. Then it was not so easy, especially when Nesta's life was threatened. As Pat wrote:

"The devil has attacked me along the line of guidance. The Lord told me to send Nesta Evans to Choconta. Her life was threatened if she stayed; mayor and all told her she had better go, as the people were likely to kill her. The devil told me that if she got killed, all the Christian public would be down on me, and so on. Had I sent Nesta there, I would have had to go to her aid, or take her away. But I had a point of intercession from which the enemy could not move me: 'God, You sent her there. She is

Your responsibility. You must look after her.' To think that we ever listen to the devil! To think that a man whose breath is in his nostrils can beat God! So I go on as God has shown me, getting my guidance direct from Him, so that I have the point of intercession that the enemy cannot touch."

The first to start out was John Harbeson to Chiquinquirá, famed as the "City of the Queen of Colombia" (a special image of the Virgin), with twenty towns of varying sizes in the surrounding country. Here on the first night the Lord led him to the right house, with "a room in the back for sleeping, and a large one looking on to the street for meetings," the owner ignoring the threats of the priests. Soon after he wrote, August, 1934:

"Often, night after night, I have my room full of young men of various ages, giving them the true Light and answering their questions; there is undoubtedly a spirit of inquiry among the young men here. I find that the testimony of the power of the Gospel to sanctify the life has a wonderful effect upon them. This is the preaching that goes right home here in Colombia. Then in my going to and fro in the city, many are the times that I am stopped in the street or called into a shop or house to answer their questions or explain the Word. Señor R. O., who is the municipal judge here, has bought a Bible and is reading studiously. He comes in every night that

I have a meeting, and stops after the others have gone, to ask questions."

Then later, April, 1935 :

"We have not had such opposition since the beginning of the work. Stones, horse-dung, insults—even hurling the stones and dung into the very room. Last Sunday night a fellow came right into the room at the beginning of the meeting with a sling ; just as I rose to read the portion from the Word, a stone came flying past me and hit the wall at my back ; the next moment another one came and sent the electric bulb into smithereens, leaving us in darkness. The police arrived on the scene and arrested him. The authorities here cannot understand us. We make it a rule never to prosecute, but to show them that we have nothing but love in our hearts even for those that attack us. On this occasion I told the inspector that I did not wish to punish the fellow, upon which he turned to me and said, 'Well, you are the strangest class of people I have ever met ; I don't know what kind of hearts you have. If you won't punish them, we will take the matter in hand and punish them severely.'

"We are distributing a thousand tracts a month here now. I have made a friend of a young priest in a place called B——. He speaks a little English, and has invited me to visit him every month. He says he likes me to speak English, but down in my heart I believe he is after some-

thing else. I spent a few days with him in his house. They put me in a room just outside his own ; he had to pass through my room to get to his. I really believe he put me there to watch me. Glory to God for the opportunity to show him how we spend the first hours of the morning ! He found me on my knees each morning reading the Word and praying, and by his manner I knew he was surprised. I also took the opportunity to watch him. He just got up and went out without prayer or the reading of the Word. We had a two-hours ride through the mountains on horseback. On the way he asked me to sing him one of our hymns in English, and I can tell you I made the mountains re-echo with 'My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine.' He was charmed with the words, and got me to write it out for him before I left. What a trophy this would be for Jesus !"

Best of all was the conversion of the first two young men. One, Alberto by name, whom John calls his Timothy, is growing in grace by leaps and bounds, and is the first student at the Bible School now being started in the capital. Another man, Señor Ortegon, who has a farm about eight miles outside the town, has promised to erect a little meeting-hall on his land. With Alberto, John Harbeson has been on his first trek down from the mountains into the "hot country." They went to a district of nearly two thousand square miles called Territorio Vasquez, of which he wrote in his journal :

"We took off collars and all unnecessary clothing : down—down—through the luxuriant country. Strike a farm : we are now in rich rice country. Here we quench our thirst with *guarapo* (native drink made from sugar cane). I leave a tract. Arrive Chiza. Here I got a great reception from the inspector—the headman of the territory, who immediately treated me to coffee and brought his map to show me the whole territory. He told me that although he himself does not take any interest in any religion, he has wanted for a long time to introduce our religion into that part, and will help me in every way possible. In the afternoon we made a trek of the district with books and tracts. When we got back, my joy was complete when the inspector told me that the family were a little sceptical and suspicious, and asked if I would mind explaining a little about our religion ! I can assure you I did not mind ; so there in the moonlight, with a congregation of some twelve or thirteen, I had the joy of opening some of the truths of the precious Word. Strange truths to these Bible-less people. Don Alberto backed home the message with his testimony. The next night again I gave another message. The result was that Don Pachito (who owns the house) and his father both bought Bibles. His father owns all the land for miles round, and has invited me back to build a church in their midst and teach them. It is a wonderful opportunity, not only for Chiza, but also for many of the other towns in this vast region."



A street in a Colombian country town.



Villavicencio, capital of the Meta Province, gateway to the vast plains and forests of the Amazon basin.



Ellen Jones



Rachael Goodfellow



Peggy Bennett

THE CHALLENGE OF COLOMBIA

But will readers also remember the special need of prayer for these single-handed pioneers? Once in a letter John Harbeson mentions a week of depression. Again, after the visit to the hot country, he had four weeks in bed with malaria, although in this case he was on a visit to Pat and so was able to have proper attention. Such facts just expose to view for the moment both the spiritual and physical stresses upon a Crusader alone in such surroundings.

Nesta Evans started out for another district with Choconta as its central town, in October, 1934. Almost from the moment of her arrival the devil made a dead set at her to frighten her out of the place. Later she wrote:

"Five weeks have gone since I first stepped out to begin here alone with God, and they have been weeks of grim, stern, but glorious fighting. One is really faced with one's nothingness when amidst twelve thousand fanatical, 'civilized' Indians (although they often act in a most uncivilized manner); but how lovely to know the battle is the Lord's, and we the fighting instruments in His hands.

"The first days I spent going from shop to shop in the market square, and was gladdened by many buying scriptures. Then we had the joy of getting permission from the mayor to speak in the market square twice a week. Contrary to our expectation, there was perfect silence during the service, forty buying portions afterwards, the police helping me in the sale. But it was on the

first Sunday that the real battle began. We had no peace from morning to night; boys from the house of the priest threw great big stones at the door, walls, and window, forcing an entrance; but I managed to keep the shutters to with all my force, or they would have destroyed all my tracts. This continued, and increased by the door being smothered with dung at nights. Finally, the poor owner, evidently frightened by the priest, kindly asked us to go. She feared they would pull the house to pieces, or burn it, especially as the annual feast days drew near, when all are drunk and fight, and when hundreds visit here to pay the Virgin money, which of course goes to the priest. I was told it would be unsafe for me to remain here during those days, being alone and a hated Protestant; but God is my keeper.

"So, being homeless, God moved a heart, a Rahab, to hide me during the feast days. There being many drunkards about, a policeman took me across, but a fanatic saw me enter the room, and began to scream, screech, and shout until the whole street were out to hear. She threatened to stone the room and stone me out of Choconta, and at last she, with others, got to such fever pitch that the policeman had to take me out. So again I was homeless, and the priest had said no one was to help me or they would be lost for ever. I asked the policemen to put me in prison, but they refused, and put me in an unfurnished room in their quarters, where I had peace in spite of the cold and damp. The next day the

mayor sent for me, and said I was in great danger, that the woman had gone to him to ask him to put me out, and that they threatened to bomb and dynamite me out. This because the priest said if I did not go, he would!—and that would mean their god would go. Also the Liberals went to the mayor to ask the same thing, as they fear in the elections they will be blamed for my presence, and so be killed. They wish me to wait until May before evangelizing!! How many souls will be lost by May? Anyway, the mayor refuses to expel me, and may he remain as firm and be saved!

"So, leaving the mayor, I had nowhere to turn to but to God, the train, or my enemies. The last I could not turn to, the train I would not, as that would have given Satan, the priest, fanatics, and Liberals a laugh, so I turned to God—again homeless. The mayor refused me a prison cell in which to hide during the feast days, and said I could not continue to live in the police quarters, whilst my Rahab (Señora Rosa) has been stoned for wishing to help me!!! I wended my way to the shop where I buy my food, and the owner (Señorita Sarah) said how sorry she was for all that has happened, and asked me to go into her one room, behind the shop; and there I remained a week. God knew I sought His glory and could not leave Choconta, so he made the impossible possible—glory!—touching a heart, who would suffer much if found out; but God has covered her, as He promised me. There

in that wee room I hid, in Heaven amidst Inferno, like a bird hid in the rock, whilst around rages all that would wish to devour him and give him an untimely end. At the other end of the canvas partition, which divided the bed from the rest of the room, were drunkards, dancing, etc., and I expected the partition on top of me every minute, and this to midnight during the feasts. How glad I was to witness by ear all that passed, as God gave me a bigger vision of their need. All Sunday, from 5 a.m. till midnight, drinking, dancing, band, bells, bull-fights, screaming, Mass, music, and cinema. Oh, the patience of God!—it is beyond me; and how they love their sin, and hate our faith of deliverance from sins and sin.

"There I was, unknown to all, even police, until the time came to step out again, as some one told Señorita Sarah they knew where I was, and she feared the priest and people. But where was I to go? No one was to help me, but '*God is*,' and Choconta is to be evangelized. There were two places, a hotel and the house where my trunks were. In the former there were no rooms—so I got absolutely desperate for God's glory, and He gave me John 14: 29; and I knew it was to be the house of the tailor, whose wife I heard was very fanatical. She was away in Bogota with one of her children who was ill, and I could not live in the house whilst the husband was alone. But the child died and she had returned! So I went, and here I am in the

house of one who is keenly interested in the Gospel, whilst his wife is very, very Catholic; yet in spite of her neighbours' threats and threats to bomb the house, and that the priest will not absolve her, etc., she permits me to stay, and tells other she will always favour me. Our God is the God of the impossible, and nothing has or will occur to them or the house, because God put me here.

"The threats continue, and even against the mayor, so I am at present forbidden to do active work, but can continue the conferences indoors, private talks, etc., and the rest of the time for a few weeks I give to prayer and fasting. Nothing but prayer will move these hearts to see their sin and need, and we need a fiery, living, gripping message and a downflow of the Holy Ghost that they cannot resist. Morality is at zero, and they love their sin, most men with many women, if married or not; illegitimacy high, and many live together unmarried. No wonder Satan is furious when we enter with 'Christ can deliver from sin,' and how they hate us. I think I expected many things in the mission field but hatred. I am stared at, followed, kept at a distance as if some resurrected prehistoric ogre, whose breath will poison nearcomers; but I am getting a hippopotamus hide by degrees, and inside there is joy unspeakable and full of glory. It has been a glorious battle, alone, wrecked on God, surrounded by those who wish one dead and surprised one has not gone, and so they give up

their threats, or they will. Hallelujah! God is nearer, dearer, bigger, and I praise Him for every scrap; and I have had my wish of being homeless for Christ and living with my comb and toothbrush for a week! It is a great and thrilling life, in which there is no defeat—and Choconta will be evangelized. Hallelujah!"

Then again on December 14:

"I am praising God here from the depths of my heart, especially for the marvellous way in which He has opened this home for me and has kept the house, occupants, and myself. The threats of bombing and stoning me out have terminated in bubbles; they do not know it, but God is greater and prayer more powerful than all their man-made schemes. The only man who makes these bombs refused to, at a big cost, and he a poor man, as he is for Christ!!! But the would-be purchaser did not know this."

"A real miracle to me is the manner in which Señora de Ramoy, a fanatic without grace, bears the neighbours' insults which are thrown at her because she keeps me (the devil to them) in her home; but she stands firm, even when they tell her she will lose all her friends, is lost, condemned, and never be forgiven, etc. Señora offered that I should help to nurse the mother of one fanatic, and the answer was that she could not have the devil to nurse her dying mother! They believe that I am of the devil and that I pray to him!! Other women have asked me to

visit them, which is much to praise for, as all women here are in the fear and grip of the priest and neighbours; thus I go and sing, read, speak, and pray each Saturday to a group of women. One wishes to follow Christ, but is about to marry the porter in the priest's house, whom she must obey and who tells her she must have nothing to do with this heresy of ours. Another woman asked me to teach her to pray. I gave her the conditions for answered prayer, and she gave her heart to the Lord, and is really changed, but fears to testify, as she says they will kill her and the children.

"One day in my visits I came to the house of the director of the big Roman Catholic college here, and, much to the surprise of many, I go to the house daily, and he corrects me in Spanish, while I help him in English — this really to get the Gospel in, as most days close in spiritual talks. How great it would be to see him saved. He has bought a Bible and New Testament, and tells me he has no faith and that his prayers get lost. One day he said if he left the college and worked for the Master, living by faith, he would be left to starve, and no one here would give him a crumb; perhaps not, but God would care for him. He has threatened to expel any students who molest me. So God works for His own."

"Glory to Him for the joy of being at the front, wrecked on Him and kept by Him amidst all threats of wicked men and women. All glory

is to Him! 'When I am weak, then I am strong,' as I am not nerveless or fearless in the battles."

"January 29.—You will all be glad to hear that the victory is won in Choconta, that is, those who oppose me are beaten, lying low, and some even greet me and speak to me. It is beautiful to see how the Lord justifies us Himself, so that now some of the worst fanatics invite me to their homes!! So give a big hallelujah if you were one of those who prayed. Yes, if we keep our seats when *in* the tunnel, and believe and trust our great God, we come out unscathed, victorious. I would not have missed what He sent for worlds.

"Since writing last the Lord has given me a soul, and this week her sister and her husband! Hallelujah!"

"April 29.—Nearly two months have passed since I last wrote; they have been very full months, because, praise to Him, Choconta has at last reached the temperature of trusting me with their lives and the lives of the little ones!! The Lord has answered my prayer as to how I could reach the women who hated and feared me, in His own noiseless and beautiful way, by taking to Himself the only midwife. It has leaked out that I am trained in midwifery, and thus many have turned to me. It is a big and open door. How marvellous are His ways! I had puzzled much as to how I could get at the women, and He has unravelled the puzzle. Hallelujah! With God nothing is impossible.

"I should like you to see some of the homes I enter. One room, with floor, ceiling, and walls of mud, thatched roof; no air, light, chimney, or window, so pitch black that I cannot see the patient, as I fall over pots, chickens, etc., on the broken, pitted floor; whilst on a bed of poles, covered with a mat of reeds, lies the mother, and there sleep all the family, often with one covering in the bitter night—yes, and their souls as dark, and having no opportunity to live better lives.

"In this house of the Ramoys' is a little slave-girl of seven (and there are younger than she in some homes). Her mother is unmarried and too poor to feed and clothe her, so Señora took her, and in return for her little food and one or two dresses (nothing else, however cold it may be), she is at the beck and call of all, having to do every dirty job there is, whoever wishes ill-treating her. How sad it makes one (and there are thousands in this land of immorality and lip-religion) when we see the dear children in the homeland, so happy and free and cared for."

Harold Wood occupied the third new centre in January, 1935—Tunja, the capital city of the province of Boyaca, and a Roman Catholic stronghold.

"Tunja at one time held a position of social prominence even greater than Bogota [Kenneth Grubb writes], and was the home of some of the highest Spanish families in the Colonial days. When Jonquiz de Quisada, the Conquistador, first approached the town, he saw an unexpected

sight. From the principal houses were suspended thin sheets of beaten gold, reflecting the declining sun, and giving out a musical and ringing sound. It was the only real centre of wealth found by the Spaniards in this land where the legend of El Dorado had its origin. It is still an ecclesiastical centre of the first importance, with seven large churches in a population of fifteen thousand, a cathedral and five minor churches, two convents, two monasteries, with a bishop with his court and episcopal palace."

In this difficult centre, with its twenty-eight surrounding towns, Harold Wood has maintained a steady witness, although so far without visible result.

A bold visit to the mayor of Tunja gave him an open door into the surrounding towns:

"The Lord impressed me to visit the mayor and make myself known to him, and ask him for a permit to sell my literature. He received me very kindly and gave me the permission. Now when people ask me are my books bad, meaning are they prohibited by the priest, I ask them would the mayor give me permission to sell bad books! And then I produce my permit with the mayor's stamp upon it. I also use it when I am visiting other towns. It generally gets me in touch with other mayors."

About one such visit he writes:

"I left shortly after 8 a.m., but was delayed some hours by losing the track. I walked until dark, and then knew it was dangerous to travel

more that day. I groped about for a place to spend the night, and lay down beneath a hedge with a Bible rolled in my towel for a pillow, and thought of Jacob and all the noble army of warriors who had passed the same way. I almost fell asleep, when my rest was disturbed by the sound of rain, and so the rain descended and the floods came until 10 p.m. I was then nice and damp, and too cold to sleep, so I gathered myself up and crouched beneath a tree until 3 a.m. I then decided to continue my journey, and was able to reach my destination by 2 p.m. In the town I mentioned my experience, and a man came afterwards to my room and asked me if I was rich or what was my motive in doing these things! For more than an hour I explained to him the Gospel. At the finish he took a testament and asked me why the priests kept from them the truth of these things. I had a good afternoon selling my scriptures, and by dusk had practically sold all. On the last journey I wore Colombian sandals and bare feet, and only put on my boots as I came near to the town. I believe it made a great impression upon the *campesinos* (the poorer people), who are not in the habit of seeing foreigners dress like them with the *ruana* (a garment like a cape worn over the shoulders) and sandals. We are aiming at becoming all things to all men, that we may win the people of Colombia to Christ."

TRAVEL east from this high tableland, and the country rapidly changes. We descend the last slopes of the Andes to that immense inland basin which is drained by two of the great rivers of the world, the Amazon and the Orinoco. From highlands we change to endless grass plains and vast tropical forests; from fresh mountain air and populous cities to tropical heat, scattered townships and lonely cattle ranches. It had always been in Pat's vision to enter this "hot country," and start work in the Meta Province, which stretches for five hundred miles from the foothills of the Eastern Cordillera to the Orinoco, so that when he heard of his next reinforcement preparing to sail, Willie Easton, he asked that special thin clothing should be included in his equipment. He was to be the first to go there.

Easton's first seven months were spent at Zipaquirá, learning Spanish and having a preliminary "baptism of fire." And certainly he gained some good experience!

"On New Year's Eve we went out to have our open-air meeting in a new street. We got through the first hymn, and Don Alberto (Harold Wood) was speaking, when some young men and boys down a nearby street commenced to throw stones. I tell you they came with a whiz

and a bang, but it is wonderful how they are made to miss the mark. Waiting until there was a 'lull in the firing,' I slipped down the street to where they were standing. On seeing me, some ran away, while the others stood calling me names. On passing an open door I was accosted by a huge man who had a long leather, iron-buckled belt in his hand. He rattled away in Spanish fifty to the second, and three times raised the belt to strike, and three times his arm fell to his side again. I whistled under my breath and said to myself, 'You are in for it this time, Guillermo (Willie)'; but no! the Lord stood by me, and to my utter astonishment he turned on his heel and walked indoors. I forgot to say he was half-drunk."

On another occasion he did not escape:

"February 16.—Soon they were all around us [Señora Matilde and himself], pushing, punching, and jostling, and the cries upon the lips of all, 'Down with the Protestants!' They jostled me as if trying to upset my balance, and, once on the ground, there is no saying what these people would do to one. The priest, an old man, and extremely fanatical, caught hold of the Señora and beat her unmercifully. The crowd separated us, but I could see it all. After some minutes he left off maltreating her and turned his attention to me and commenced beating me. He was absolutely mad. It was wonderful how through it all our hearts were kept in perfect peace. It was only when we reached home that the Señora

gave way and broke down and cried. She is real true blue and a real gift to the work."

Another time he nearly got more in a public house than he had bargained for!

"May 11.—Last Thursday I had a rather funny experience after our open-air meeting. I entered a *chicharia* (public house) to give out tracts, and met a man who was very anxious to treat me to some whisky, which I politely refused. He took my refusal as an insult, and tried to make me drink by putting the glass to my lips. On my way home I went into another *chicharia* to give out tracts, and had a similar experience, only this time it was a bit more exciting. A big fellow with a puffed-up face and bloodshot eyes asked me my opinion of the Virgin, which I told him. He got a bit hysterical, and seized me in a bear-like manner and carried me over to the counter, and commanded the attendant to bring a glass of whisky. The other men present were enjoying the joke. The situation was getting rather exciting when one of the company interceded on my behalf, and I was freed. I think these men take mean advantage of my five feet five inches and eight stones seven pounds!"

Finally, in May, 1935, the start was made. So far as we know, no missionary has ever before gone to this vast province to reside, though it may have had a rare visit from a colporteur. Pat Symes accompanied him on the journey.

"We continued our journey by mule [wrote Easton]. The sun overhead was very strong,

and at first there was no escape from its sweltering rays, but later it was a joy and a relief to find shelter and cool among the tall, green, and dew-dripping vegetation. A thousand feet below thundered the river. Sometimes we lost sight of it for quite a time, but at all times its far-away sound was in our ears. At different points it is fed by mountain torrents, the white foam of which could be seen as silver streaks in the sun, winding their way in and out like endless serpents. By six o'clock it was quite dark and raining heavily. In fact, we were soaked. When darkness falls, then it is that the rider has to trust himself wholly and unreservedly to his sure-footed mule. At half-past seven, along with six others, we arrived at a wayside inn named Buenavista, and all agreed that it was better to call a halt and put up there for the night. It was still raining in the morning after we had had breakfast. But about 11 a.m. it cleared a bit, and by 12.30 we were on the way again. Now we were going down, down, down towards the *sabana* land (flat country). About 2 p.m. we arrived at our desired haven, Villavicencio, capital of the Meta Province. On the outskirts of the town there is a fast-flowing but not a very broad river, which we had to cross. As our mules went clatter, clatter, clatter over the rough, uneven, cobbled streets, and as the people on the streets and others standing at their doors examined us closely, one felt, 'My, what a day is this! Another place entered with the Gospel, and from which the Gospel will go to the

great Meta region. Hallelujah! Very soon we had pasture-land for the animals, and food and a room for ourselves. That very evening we had help and advice given us from two men about renting a room. They promised further help the following day.

"*Friday.*—To-day final arrangements were made with the man who gave us the first room. Also Don Pat ordered forms for the room, and I shall have meetings as soon as possible. There is nothing like having the colours flying in the breeze straight away.

"*Saturday.*—At 5 p.m. I said good-bye to Don Pat, and in less time than it takes to describe he was out of sight, and I was alone in Villavicencio—and yet not alone, for Christ was with me. As I walked back to my rooms I had a big 'Thank you' in my heart to God for the glorious privilege of being here as His witness. Hallelujah!

"The town is not very grand. It is composed of simple whitewashed houses with corrugated iron roofs. The streets are made of very rough cobble-stones, and slope from the sidewalks toward the centre, where there is a continual flow of water. It is an excellent idea, and even although we have tropical rains here, one never finds oneself walking through mud ankle-deep, as is customary in Zipaquira. The mountains are behind the city and on either side, in the shape of a great horseshoe. Leading out from the horseshoe the country is flat, ever so flat. It is much



Ellen West



Jessie Fleming



Kenneth Green



The latest snap taken at the New Year Prayer Conference, Zipaquira, January 1-14, 1936. Top row (left to right)—John Harbeson, Kenneth Green, Harold Wood, Willie Easton. Middle row—Jessie Fleming, Peggy Bennett, Nesta Evans, Señora Matilde de Hoyos, Nellie West. Bottom row—Rachael Goodfellow, Pat Symes, Ellen Jones.

THE CHALLENGE OF COLOMBIA

hotter here, and more exacting on one's strength, but one is gradually becoming accustomed to it. The Spanish version of Psalm 121 : 6 is, 'The sun shall not *fatigue* thee by day.' Hallelujah !

"July 16.—I have now been here about seven weeks, and during that time I have twice covered the city with the Scriptures and free propaganda. Despite the indescribable poverty of the majority of the people, the sale of scriptures was, and still is, very satisfactory. For the last few weeks I have been the subject matter of the sermons of the priest. Good matter—eh ! I trust his people were edified ! But God turns the battle against the enemy, and the result of this onslaught was that two men came to my room, and each bought a New Testament. To-day another came and bought forty gospels, and asked for free propaganda with them, as he wanted to distribute them among his friends. Also there are those who have great interest. One man has invited me to his house to teach him. Another old chap is reading the Word, and I am free to visit his house any hour of the day."

Then follows his first real trekking experience into the grass plains, of which he gives an enthralling account :

"August 12.—On the evening of August 7 I was standing at my door having a breather before turning in for the night, when the Lord said to me, 'To-morrow I want you to go to Apiay.' I said, 'But I have not a horse.' The Lord said, 'You can walk.' 'But there is a river,

and perhaps rivers, to cross.' 'Well, cross them.' Oh, these 'buts'! I had others: 'But where is Apiay? How many houses are there?' etc. At last it seemed to me that a voice said, 'Man, shut up, don't argue—but Go.' And so the following morning at 8.30, with a caseful of books, an umbrella, and a flashlight, I set out for Apiay. I set the pace to 'Begone, unbelief, my Saviour is near.' It is a good marching tune.

"At some parts the road was heavy because of the rain of the previous day, and soon I was perspiring freely. After about two hours on the way I heard the roar of the river not far distant, and soon a quick turn on the road brought it in full view. Well, having done all the arguing that was not necessary the night before, I slipped into the bush on the right-hand side and commenced to strip. The only spectators I had were monkeys who were playing in the branches of the trees which bordered the river. I presented a funny spectacle to them as I stepped out into the water, carrying my case and clothes shoulder-high and wearing my hat!! I thought I heard them laugh! I crossed without any mishap, breasting the water in the middle of the river. Praise the Lord! I was soon on my way again.

"About twelve o'clock I reached Apiay, and discovered that it consisted of half a dozen houses. I visited these, and sold and gave away portions of the Word, then had a word of prayer, telling the Lord, if He had nothing else for me to do, that I would get back to Villavicencio. But

I had a strong conviction that my work for the day was not finished, and as the time went on it proved so. I remembered that I had the name of a man who bought a Bible from me in Villa market, and who told me that he lived out Apiay way, so I set out to find this man, believing I was in the will of God.

"Beyond the few houses known as Apiay lies the *sabana*—the plains, and they just go rolling on and on, mile after mile, affording no shelter whatever from the midday sun. It was a great walk. There was not another soul in sight, and the silence on these plains is absolutely austere. On two occasions I left the main path and cut through the grass to visit a couple of houses. At Number One I had an experience with a dog. I knocked at one door, but received no answer, so I decided to try the other side of the house, where there was another door. It was open, and inside were two persons. They invited me to enter. On doing so I passed a dog which took a sudden liking, not to my pants, as schoolboy stories often put it, but to my leg. It waited until I had passed before it fastened itself on me. For the moment we were one, then at a word from its master it let go its hold. I sat down beside these people, and gave them the Word. One young man was prostrate with fever. Here I received instructions as to how to reach the home of Señor Hoyos. Once I was out in the plain again, I laid my hands upon the dog-bite and in the name of Jesus cured myself from any ill effects. The skin

was broken in two places, and very red, and also blue in parts.

"At the second house I sold the Word. As I approached it I recalled my experience with the dog at the first house, and so I had a word of prayer to bind any dogs that might be there. As I crossed the *potrero* (grazing-place for horses) I saw a dog just as big and ugly looking as the first dog, and it saw me and came bounding towards me, snarling like the devil himself. Well, I walked straight for it, saying aloud, 'I've bound you in the name of Jesus'; and so saying, I placed my hand upon its head, and it stopped and became quiet; and then I walked past it, leaving it to trot behind me at my heels. At this house, as at all the others, I tried to purchase food, but in vain. However, they were able to sell me a couple of eggs, which I broke into a cup and drank up. Then I not only received more instructions on the way, but a man offered to take me there. At first I felt a bit independent, but as I was beginning to feel the effects of the day's march, and a bit hungry and sun-scorched (my face and arms were just like red flesh), and almost on the edge of the plain, for on ahead I could see the plantations, I accepted his offer. It cost me only seven cents.

"At the edge of the plain we crossed a deep stream, and entered the plantation. I asked the man if there were other streams, and he said yes, so I decided to continue barefooted. We went on for a couple of hours in this manner; the way

was one long quagmire; sometimes we walked upon fallen trees, other times we got out of it to walk upon the thick, hard, burning grass, when every step was pain. At last we reached the gateway which led into the farm of Señor Hoyos. There was a stream there, so I decided to wash my feet and legs and to put on my socks and shoes.

"On arriving at the farm I had a great welcome. In fact, they treated me just like a son, and invited me to stay overnight, which I believe was an answer to prayer. After a drink of the famous *agua dulce* (sweet water), a wash, and a plateful of good things, we sat down to talk. The house stands in a great clearing in the station, and is simplicity itself. The roof is thatched with thick grass and broad banana leaves, and is supported by strong thick poles which stand some distance apart. The front of the house stands open, absolutely open, with the exception of three or four feet at one end which is walled half-way up with straps of cane, forming the one and only room where the whole family sleeps. The back of the house is walled up right to the roof with the same cane straps. The river flows nearby which supplies the household water. On the other side of the river is the plantation where bananas, sugar-cane, and coffee grow in profusion. During our conversation I discovered that this man had read the Word, and was conversant both with the Old and New Testaments, and I believe the Lord has done a work in his heart. He is

absolutely severed from the Church of Rome, in spite of the fact that in his family two of his brothers are priests in the capital. Pointing to his children who stood around listening, he said, 'These are the *evangelicos* of the future.' It was a great joy to me to talk with such a man as he, and one simply longs for more of his kind.

"But there was still greater blessing in store. As the sun was sinking in the west and at the same time colouring the sky in the east, I was walking up and down the *potrero* talking to God about this family, and thanking Him for His perfect guidance, when the *peones* (labourers) came in from the rice-fields. A dozen of them came in answer to a horn which Señor Hoyos blows loud and long. All of them were young men, with the exception of one. With one accord they all went down to the river to wash. Afterwards they changed their clothing and gathered round for supper. Naturally the conversation drifted on to the Bible and religion, and so we had an informal meeting. Hallelujah! Jesus was preached. Señor Hoyos helped me in a most enthusiastic manner. When he started I just sat back with the others and allowed him to continue. Afterwards all, with the exception of two, bought Scriptures—Bibles, New Testaments, and portions. Then in the clear moonlight we all retired, some to beds and others to hammocks. I had a hammock. As I lay in my hammock I could hear the Word of God being read with the aid of flickering candles, and I thought how necessary

it is to have a sensitive ear to the voice of God. What if I had argued myself out of obedience the night before? And how necessary it is to continue in faith right to the end of the march, for the Lord does not always reveal the 'why' and 'wherefore' of guidance at the first step, but waits until we have taken the last step, when He gives us to see and understand all; and the heart just fills with praise and gratitude to God. That night the dog-bite was swollen and painful, but, hallelujah! in the morning the swelling was down, the pain gone, and since then I have had no trouble with it. I am going back again when I have a horse, and hope to visit other farmers scattered up and down that region. Señor Hoyos has promised to accompany me."

WHEN Pat Symes first arrived at Bogota, Mr. Allan gave him an opportunity of meeting some of the Presbyterian workers, who were having a conference.

"They welcomed me [wrote Pat], and told me how glad they were to see me and that they would do all they could to help me. They asked me about our Mission and what we represented. So I told them about Bwana (C. T. Studd), and the rest of the work. I also told them that we had come to evangelize any parts in this country that others could not. I said that we were out to do it in twenty years, and that I expected to have fifty workers in the first ten years."

When we read this at home, we must admit it took us by surprise, and seemed a very bold thing to have said. One lone missionary of an unknown Mission arriving in the capital and talking of fifty workers in ten years, when most missions were talking about retrenchment, not advance!

We have already told at the beginning of this story how God had renewed vision, commission, and faith in 1931, at the death of our founder, C. T. Studd, in our first field, the Heart of Africa. The first practical guidance we then received was to ask the Lord for ten new workers before the first anniversary of Mr. Studd's death

(July 16, 1932), without any appeal to man. These came, and were sent out to the Heart of Africa.

In the second year we asked the Lord for fifteen by the second anniversary (July 16, 1933). These also came, but with an important difference. The worldwide vision began to take shape, and besides the Heart of Africa, Crusaders went out to Central Asia, Arabia, Spanish Guinea (West Africa), and Colombia. This was the beginning of the Colombian work, and the first four for Colombia were members of this "Fifteen"—Pat Symes, Nesta Evans, John Harbeson, and Harold Wood.

Soon after Pat had sailed, we published a leaflet telling of what God had done, and stating at the end that we believed He would send us twenty-five new workers by the third anniversary (July 16, 1934). As soon as Pat read of this, he wrote, not merely asking for a share for Colombia, but stating outright the number he was going to have! "I see by your leaflet that God is going to give twenty-five for the coming year. Hallelujah! Well, do you know, God has given me five of these for Colombia! If you think that I have taken more than my share, then you had better go up to thirty, and if you do I might be after one of them!" The year passed. Not an effort was made on our part to select any of "The Twenty-five" for any particular field. Each volunteered for the land to which God had called him, and, when tested and accepted, went forward. Exactly

five sailed for Colombia. First Willie Easton, of whom we have already written, then a party of four — Kenneth Green, Ellen Jones, Peggy Bennett, and Rachel Goodfellow. Thus the total in Colombia rose to nine, and then to ten by the inclusion on the field of Señora Matilde de Hoyos, the Colombian Crusader, as a W.E.C. missionary. (The other members of "The Twenty-five" went to the fields already entered, and to one new field, the Ivory Coast, West Africa.)

With "The Twenty-five" complete, we were led to ask for double that number, fifty, by the fourth anniversary (July 16, 1935). The money came in one gift of five thousand pounds, and the applicants. At the time of writing, the first half of this number are being tested, and when accepted, will be sent forward. Already two of them have sailed for Colombia—Ellen West and Jessie Fleming. Five more are shortly sailing—John Byers, John Thomas, Alec McNaughten, Dennis Fisher, and Evelyn Arnold. Two more are at Headquarters awaiting acceptance. This already makes a total of another nine Crusaders for Colombia, out of the first half of "The Fifty." In all probability there will be another five at least out of the second half.

Thus in three and a half years the Lord has already sent nineteen workers for Colombia, with the most probable addition of five more—twenty-four, almost half the number in four years which Pat publicly stated by faith, when he arrived

alone at Bogota with neither men nor funds behind him, that the Lord would send in ten years. We can only stand back in amazement and thankfulness as we see what God has done, and encourage ourselves to press on with the Crusade to take the Gospel into every unevangelized land with this visible proof that "faith is the substance of things hoped for," and the greatest weapon, next to love, in the armoury of God's soldiers.

As for the area evangelized. We have already told of five centres occupied: Zipaquirá, which has been the headquarters, but is now being left to Señora Matilde as her centre; Chingiquira occupied by John Harbeson, Choconta by Nesta Evans, Tunja by Harold Wood, Villavicencio by Willie Easton. Two more are now in occupation. Pat has been led to move the headquarters to Bogota, the capital, both because of the great suburbs without a witness and in order to start a Bible school for Colombian evangelists, the first two having already arrived. Kenneth Green has just gone to occupy Viota, Peggy Bennett and Rachel Goodfellow to Chapinero. This means eight centres with an unremitting Gospel campaign, each with a probable average population of thirty thousand in towns and villages.

In four years, twenty-four workers, three hundred thousand under evangelization, eight centres occupied. Something done, thank God, and done too in what the world calls the years of depression and financial stringency. "By faith" has proved the secret of the twentieth century as

much as in the days of Hebrews 11. The hosts of God are marching on, "through faith"—undauntables and unconquerables. The Cross-way and the Lamb-character are and always will be the two most irresistible forces on earth. But this little bit of an advance neither blinds nor intoxicates us. "Write the W.E.C. down as a failure," once wrote C. T. Studd our founder, "till every soul has learned of Jesus." If that is true, what have we to boast of? Three hundred thousand in process of hearing: over five millions still unreached! No! Our boast is our Director, the Lord Jesus Christ. Our shame is ourselves.

These now on the field live full stretch for God; the Cross is their daily portion in loneliness, hardship, danger, reviling; the Crown of thorns the only kind of honour they receive: and they glory in it, for they glory to be like their Master. Will we follow in their train?

C. T. Studd, ablaze for God and an unevangelized world, laid possessions, fame, home, wife, children, health, and finally life itself at the Saviour's feet; for he wrote his whole heart out, and the whole truth too, when he scribbled on a post card words which have become the motto of the W.E.C., "If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." In the sight of Calvary, in the sight of the thousand millions who "have either never heard Christ's name, or do not know its significance for them," in the presence of such lives as C. T. Studd and the living examples

before us in Colombia, what is my response, and yours? The best thing we can do is to put down this book, get on our knees, and say straight out to God, "Christ Jesus shall have my whole heart; the Cross shall be my glory, to bear it as well as believe in it; God's will and work, especially the fulfilment of His last command, shall be the sole objective of my life. Amen."

And perhaps as we say it, the Word of the Lord may come to some reader to go himself or herself to fill up the fifty for Colombia, and help complete the evangelization of this most needy and yet wide-open republic of South America.

Hear the wail of the priest-crushed lands,
Man's device for God's commands;
Forms as countless as the sands
Have blocked the way to Calvary.

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THE WORLDWIDE EVANGELIZATION CRUSADE

Heart of Africa Mission	• (23 Crusaders 12 Stations)
Heart of Colombia Mission	• (16 Crusaders 8 Stations)
Heart of Asia Mission	• (13 Crusaders 5 Stations)
Ivory Coast Mission	• (4 Crusaders 1 Station)
Spanish Guinea Mission	• (4 Crusaders 1 Station)
Heart of Arabia Mission	• (2 Crusaders 1 Station)
Honorary Headquarters Staff	11 Crusaders
Shortly Sailing to Various Fields	38 Crusaders

Founder • C. T. STUDD

OBJECT

The Evangelization of every part of the Unevangelized World in the shortest possible time.

DOCTRINAL BASIS

Commonly called The Five Smooth Stones

1. Absolute Faith in the Deity of each Person of the Trinity.
2. Absolute Belief in the full Inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.
3. Vow to know and to preach none other save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.
4. Obedience to Christ's command to love all who love the Lord Jesus sincerely without respect of persons and to love all men.
5. Absolute Faith in the Will, Power, and Providence of God to meet our every need in His service.

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